

## Message Text

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51

ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7800

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PDIP, FR, JA

SUBJECT: JEAN-PIERRE BRUNET, NEW FRENCH AMBASSADOR TO JAPAN

1. JEAN-PIERRE BRUNET, 55, A CAREER DIPLOMAT WHO UNTIL RECENTLY WAS DIRECTOR OF THE ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS BUREAU IN THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, HAS BEEN NAMED FRENCH AMBASSADOR TO TOKYO.

2. BRUNET ENTERED THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE AFTER A WARTIME CAREER AS A NAVAL OFFICER. HE SERVED IN LONDON FROM 1945 TO 1947 AND IN THE ECONOMIC AFFAIRS BUREAU OF THE QUAI FROM 1947 TO 1961. BRUNET THEN WAS DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES IN BRUSSELS (1961-64) AFTER WHICH HE RETURNED TO THE ECONOMIC AFFAIRS BUREAU OF THE QUAI. HE HAS BEEN DIRECTOR OF THE ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS BUREAU SINCE OCTOBER, 1966. IN ADDITION, BRUNET HOLDS EX OFFICIO EXECUTIVE POSTS IN A NUMBER OF FRENCH STATE-OWNED CORPORATIONS, INCLUDING THE BANK OF FRANCE, ELF-ERAP (FRANCE'S SECOND LARGEST OIL IMPORTER AND DISTRIBUTOR) AND AIR FRANCE -- POSTS HE IS GIVING UP TO TAKE THE TOKYO EMBASSY.

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3. BRUNET IS A STAUNCH GAULLIST WHO HAS CONSISTENTLY ADVOCATED THE POLICY THAT FRANCE SHOULD LEAD EUROPE INTO GREATER INDEPENDENCE FROM THE UNITED STATES. SINCE THE ELECTION OF GISCARD D'ESTAING, HOWEVER, EMBASSY OFFICERS HAVE NOTED A CHANGE IN TONE IN BRUNET'S ATTITUDE. ALWAYS FRANK AND POLITE IN HIS DEALINGS WITH AMERICAN OFFICIALS HE NOW APPEARS ANXIOUS TO BE MORE HELPFUL. ALTHOUGH HE HAS NOT CHANGED HIS ESSENTIAL IDEAS, HE HAS MADE A CONSIDERABLE EFFORT IN THE POST-GAULLIST PERIOD TO FIND ACCOMMODATIONS BETWEEN AMERICAN AND FRENCH VIEWS. ON A NUMBER OF OCCASIONS, BRUNET HAS BEEN HELPFUL IN ADJUSTING FRENCH POSITIONS TO BECOME MORE ACCEPTABLE TO THE UNITED STATES.

4. IT HAS LONG BEEN RUMORED THAT BRUNET WOULD LEAVE HIS POWERFUL AND LONG-HELD POST AT THE QUAI, AND THESE RUMORS WERE ACCELERATED BY THE CHANGE IN GOVERNMENT IN MAY 1974. NOW BRUNET HAS BEEN REPLACED BY HENRI FROMENT-MEURICE WHO IS IF ANYTHING A MORE UNCOMPROMISING GAULLIST THAN BRUNET BUT WHO PERHAPS WILL ENJOY SOMEWHAT LESS INDEPENDENCE THAN HIS PREDECESSOR. BRUNET, WHO HAS CONSIDERABLE INFLUENCE WITH PRESIDENT GISCARD D'ESTAING AND FOREIGN MINISTER SAUVAGNARGUES, WANTED WASHINGTON AS COMPENSATION FOR STEPPING DOWN AT THE QUAI; ALTERNATIVELY, HE IS SAID TO HAVE WANTED THE EMBASSY IN LONDON OR BONN -- NEITHER OF WHICH WAS AVAILABLE. PRUNET, WHO HAS NO ASIAN EXPERIENCE, BELIEVES THAT FRANCE HAS NEGLECTED ITS ECONOMIC RELATIONS WITH JAPAN; GIVEN HIS BACKGROUND AND INTERESTS, HE WILL NO DOUBT FOCUS ON STRENGTHENING ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL TIES BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. IN THIS HE SHOULD BE SUPPORTED BY HIS PREDECESSOR IN TOKYO, LABOULAYE, WHO HAS BECOME DIRECTOR OF POLITICAL AFFAIRS. WE EXPECT BRUNET WILL SEEK TO ESTABLISH A FRIENDLY AND REASONABLY COOPERATIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH HIS AMERICAN COLLEAGUES IN TOKYO.

5. BRUNET, A MAN OF CONSIDERABLE CHARM AND WIT, SPEAKS FLAWLESS AND EXPRESSIVE ENGLISH. HIS ENGLISH IS COLLOQUIAL AND BRITISH-ACCENTED, AS HE WAS BROUGHT UP BY AN ENGLISH NANNY AND SAW NAVAL SERVICE WITH THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BRITISH IN WORLD WAR II. HIS FIRST WIFE, WHO DIED IN AN AUTO ACCIDENT, WAS ENGLISH. BRUNET MARRIED IN 1970 A YOUNG FRENCH GIRL GENEVIEVE DIDRY; THEY HAVE ONE DAUGHTER.  
RUSH

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